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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

The best thing that can happen for the whole country and the economy is to settle the case against Microsoft. The technology industry moves so quickly that the government should be more concerned about companies like AOL, than Microsoft. AOL is a perfect example of a company positioned to take control of the digital media business from end to end. Focus on the future, not the past!

Many say it is a coincidence that the stock market dived sharply when it was announced the first time that negotiations between Microsoft and the plaintiffs had been broken off. I however think there was a direct correlation, and the longer this thing drags on, the worse it is for everyone.

The states that are not part of the current settlement happen to have major Microsoft competitors headquartered in their states, what a coincidence. These companies need to innovate and stop litigating. I find it hard to understand why everyone is up in arms over Microsoft, when government backed monopolies like Airbus Industries in Europe exist to compete unfairly against Boeing. The US is not able to trade freely with many other nations on this planet, yet we waste our time attacking our own companies. I can only imagine how many countries would love to have a Microsoft. Yet, instead of enjoying such a successful company, our country seeks to destroy it. What a huge waste of resources. Yes, my tax dollars and many other hard working American's tax dollars. Where does it stop?

Please do not forget that Microsoft commoditized the personal computer industry. If we had three or four major PC OS vendors, then software would cost more, and do less. Having a common standard to write to is very good for the consumer. What if we had four different standards for electricity. A company who makes blenders would have to make four flavors to accommodate the different standards. Of course they would have to pass the cost of the extra tools to make the four flavors along to the consumer.

As for integrating into the OS useful tools and utilities like a browser or media player, I think it is good. Even though Netscape has failed to technically innovate in a long time, Microsoft's browser gets better and better even though it does not have to. When I bought my first PC I spent hundreds of dollars on utilities, that often did not work well with my DOS OS. When I called for support I was told it was an OS problem, call IBM. I would rather integrate than have to spend more money to buy the extras I need from a third party.

Some food for thought, a good spreadsheet, word processor and graphics package in the mid-1980's cost about \$500 each, for a grand total of \$1,500. None of them worked together and the menu systems were different on each. Sharing data between them was far from easy. Today you can buy the same three packages from Microsoft for about \$500 for all three, and they work very well together. Sounds pretty good to me.

As a market leader, Microsoft does not have to innovate at the rate it does. That is what happened to so many other software vendors - they viewed success as a destination. Microsoft views success as a journey, one that they are always shooting for.

In closing I will admit Microsoft is no saint. They are a fierce competitor. Yet I believe an America with Microsoft is better than one without. If we are not careful the next Microsoft may end up being in a foreign country where we do not benefit nearly as much as having it in our own backyard.

Please get this issue behind us and move on...

Thank you for your time.

Regards,
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